

IWC Governance Review

Review and Response by the Conservation Committee

The Conservation Committee was established in 2003 by Resolution 2003-1 in recognition of the increasing role of the Commission in the conservation of whales. In 2016 the Commission adopted the Conservation Committee's first Strategic Plan.

The Governance Review considered the institutional and governance arrangements of the Conservation Committee. Pages 27-28 of the Governance Review report provide comments and recommendations on the Conservation Committee. There are also other sections of the Governance Review, commenting more generally on Commission subgroups that are of relevance to the Conservation Committee.

The tables below summarize the recommendations and related comments that are either specific to, or areas of interest for, the Conservation Committee.

The Conservation Committee is invited to:

- Discuss and provide initial views on the recommendations in Table 1, specifically highlighting any areas of strong support or concern.
- Make recommendations on how the Conservation Committee could most effectively input into future governance work.

Following this discussion, a report will be written summarizing the views expressed by the Committee (which may or may not be a consensus view) and including updates to tables 1 and 2, along with any other recommendations from the Committee. The intent of this summary is to provide the Conservation Committee's initial views on relevant recommendations to the Commission for its consideration.

This report will be circulated for comments by participants in the Conservation Committee meeting at the same time as the full Conservation Committee report.

Table 1 – Summary of Governance Review Recommendations of relevance to the Conservation Committee

Governance Review Recommendation or Comment	Section/Paragraph	CC Chair Note/CC Observations (this column will be updated with any additional observations made at the CC)
Theme 1 – Strategic Direction		
The IWC should ensure greater scrutiny and assessment of reports from subsidiary bodies and provide clearer directions for their inter-sessional work.	Recommendation 2	
The IWC should develop and adopt a Strategic Plan and a multi-year work programme setting strategic directions and clear priorities for the work of IWC and its subsidiary bodies in line with best practice of other treaty bodies. Ideally, “what”, “why”, by “whom” and by “when” should be clearly defined for each task agreed in the strategic plan.	Recommendation 6	The Conservation Committee strategic plan can be found at https://iwc.int/conservation-committee . Work is ongoing to develop thematic strategic plans and clear, costed work plans to support the CC’s strategic plan.
Theme 2 – Progressing the CC work programme		
The IWC’s inter-sessional process should be strengthened, including through having a well-structured and effective subsidiary body system.	Recommendation 1	
Effective involvement of States in decision making during the inter-sessional period is needed, particularly in the case of developing States which should be supported to attend IWC meetings including those of the scientific and conservation committees.	Recommendation 1 and Paragraph 57	At IWC67 four delegates from countries of limited means will be supported to attend the CC meeting through the Voluntary Assistance Fund
IWC Scientific Committee and other committees should provide information to Commission Members in a format and structure that allows effective consideration of scientific and policy issues and their implications for Commission decision making.	Recommendation 3	
All IWC Commission decisions should be properly reflected in the work programme, in a prioritized manner, with the human and/or financial resources needed to ensure their implementation clearly identified and allocated. They should be taken up by Subsidiary	Recommendation 7	Development of costed programmes of work will be discussed in the report of the Intersessional Correspondence Group on Strengthening Finance (CC agenda item 17)

Bodies, including the Scientific Committee, with a clear follow-up mechanism put in place. At the very least, in the report of the SC and other bodies, a clear and specific response on progress achieved on every recommendation/ request presented by the Commission should be given.		Progress on the database of recommendations, and on its potential use to facilitate the review of implementation of recommendations will be reported under CC agenda item 5.
Better use should be made in the Conservation Committee of existing expertise on cetacean conservation.	Recommendation 24 and Paragraph 58	
Theme 3 – Funding, Administration, and structure		
All IWC Committees, sub-committees and Working Groups should ensure the submission of written reports at a minimum, annually, in a way that avoids duplication and the overburdening of the Chair of the IWC and the Executive Secretary.	Recommendation 15	
All IWC Committees, sub-committees and Working Groups should have clear and consistent Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure, including for the selection of the Chair and a sunset clause with a clear end date, or, alternatively, a clear recognition of their permanent nature.	Recommendation 15	
Mechanisms for better communication, collaboration and coordination between the different IWC subsidiary bodies should be established, to enable them to better address instructions from the Commission and to avoid overlapping. Such mechanisms could include, inter alia: (i) joint meetings; (ii) common membership of different bodies; (iii) joint projects; and (iv) regular and effective communication of meeting minutes, key outcomes and products.	Recommendation 16, Paragraph 57, and Paragraph 58	
IWC should make papers available in advance of Committee and Working Group Meetings	Recommendation 17	All meeting papers are made available on advance of Conservation Committee meetings. CC agenda item 4.1 discusses draft Working Methods for the Conservation Committee which sets out proposed document submission deadlines
The Conservation Committee should be allocated resources from the core budget.	Recommendation 24, Paragraph 57, and Paragraph 58	

A Head of Conservation to mirror the Head of Science position should be created	Recommendation 24 and Paragraph 58	
Increased Secretariat support for the Committee should be provided.	Recommendation 24 and Paragraph 58	
The frequency and timing of CC meetings should be revised.	Recommendation 24	Proposal for annual CC meetings will be discussed under agenda item CC agenda item 4.1.
Wider Commission Recommendations to note		
A clearer and more logical structure should be established for the IWC Committee and Working Group system, setting out: (i) the roles of, and the distinction between, committees, sub-committees and Working Groups; (ii) which current groups fit into which category; and (iii) opportunities for reducing duplication and ensuring better reporting arrangements between the different groups. The development of this structure should be led by the Commission and should be included in the strategic plan, referred to in Recommendation 6.	Recommendation 14, Paragraph 57, and Paragraph 58	
IWC should continue and expand its cooperation with external organisations to enhance the achievement of IWC objectives. This outreach effort and cooperation should be embedded in the new IWC Strategic Plan and multi-year work programme and should include: (i) continuing its membership on the BLG and increase cooperation with BLG Members and other relevant treaty bodies on areas of mutual interest, supported by the development of MoUs where relevant and necessary; (ii) considering implementation of a joint workshop between CITES, IWC, and CMS to discuss and agree on joint areas of work; (iii) increasing cooperation with the FAO and RFMOs on the prevention of entanglement and bycatch of cetaceans; and (iv) continuing its involvement in global ocean management cooperation in the context of UN Sustainable Development Goal 14.	Recommendation 36	See report to IWC67 plenary on progress with engaging other organisations.
The Rules of Procedure (RoP) should be a standing item for Commission meetings and should be comprehensively reviewed.	Recommendation 39	Proposed CC Working Methods will be discussed under CC agenda item 4.1.

This review should address, at a minimum:(v) requiring RoP for all IWC subsidiary bodies.		
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Table 2 – Additional observations made by the Governance Review Panel.

Section/Paragraph	Governance Review Panel Recommendation or Comment
Paragraph 56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work of the Conservation Committee was slow initially but has accelerated with more Secretariat support - Positive comments on the work of the Conservation Committee, in terms of the work undertaken and also of the role of the Conservation Committee in encouraging greater cooperation within the IWC - Some remaining diverging views on the utility and relevance of the CC
Paragraph 57	<p>CC still faces many challenges including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Imbalance between the work of the SC and CC including disparity in resources (no core budget) and meeting time - Role clarity. Need for better coordination and synergy with SC and other subsidiary bodies - Limited budget. Sole reliance on voluntary contributions - Recognition of CC. Some governments do not attend which provides challenges for effectiveness and legitimacy
Paragraph 58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater focus on the work of the Conservation Committee is warranted, but should not detract from the work of the Scientific Committee - Strong case to increase the number of dedicated staff to support the CC and to enhance the time and funds available, from the core budget, for it to undertake its work. - Potential for better use of expertise on cetacean conservation within Contracting Governments, and the Scientific Committee, within the work of the Conservation Committee. - Need to upgrade the contact group between the Scientific and Conservation Committees from its current rather marginal role.